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History ()

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MAPLE LEAVES.



POEMS,

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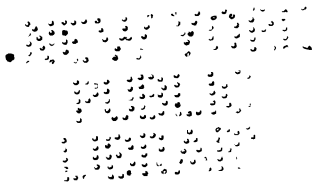
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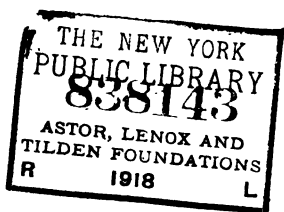


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MAPLE LEAVES.

Decoration Day.

FAIR Summer once more weaves her sheen
Of velvet leaves and grasses green,
Again the bee, through sunny hour,
Industrious flits from flow'r to flow'r;
Blue is the sky that bends above—
The arc of God's eternal love;
And fair the earth, o'er which we tread
To decorate our gallant dead.
Who are they? Ask the loyal North
Whose patriotism sent them forth:
Go, ask the snowy woods of Maine,
Where pine tree bends to pine again;
Go, ask the winds that, wild and free,
Ripple the placid Tennessee;
And ask the widow as she stands
To-day with flowers in her hands.
Each year we seek the sacred place
Where sleep the heroes of the race:

Each year we come with varied bloom
To decorate the soldier's tomb,
And open in our hearts the good
And great flood-gates of gratitude!

All o'er the world the gallant dead
In many lands are cherished!
The Scot still hears at Ben-Venue
The bugle blast of Rhoderick Dhu;
And once a year, by Allen tide,
He sees Fitz James's troopers ride.
Around the hearth, in Sweden bleak,
Still glows with pride the childish cheek,
As grandsire doth the story tell
How great Gustavus fought and fell.
In every land, whose honored sod,
By martyrs and by heroes trod,
Is green to-day, Remembrance weaves
The patriot's crown of fadeless leaves.
Go, scan the mighty Book of Time,
Whose pages glow with deeds sublime,
And read, with proudly swelling soul;
The names on Honor's muster roll.
Immortal names! I scan the list;
Fame has no Union soldier miss'd!
All, all are there, and yet we say,

As beats our hearts with pride to-day,
They were the bravest, truest, best—
The blue coats of the North and West.
Not better they who, in the dell,
With Home and Douglas fought and fell;
Not braver they whose trumpet calls
Still echo round old Warsaw's walls;
Nor truer they whose courage broke,
In Greece, the Macedonian yoke!
What hand would blot from Hist'ry's page
The proudest record of the age? —
That twice two hundred thousand men,
Whose like we ne'er shall see again,
Gave up their lives without a moan,
That Liberty's foundation stone,
Wrought by their sires, should still uphold,
Unbroke, her temple, grand and old.
To fame their gallant deeds belong;
They stand immortalized in song.
Let Gettysburg the pean swell,
And Mission Ridge the story tell;
Let Chattanooga's cloud-kissed peak
The annals of devotion speak;
And let each grove, whose branches wave
Above the loyal hero's grave,
In low, sweet song—calm Nature's verse—

The story of their deeds rehearse.
They kept us One—those boys in blue—
Who sleep the long, long summer through ;
They made us strong ; in loving bands
They bound the cold and sunny lands.
One flag for all, from northern pine
To Louisiana's sea-girt line ;
For all one law ; the land content ;
And over all *one* president.

Go where yon woman tells her grief,
As silently she turns the leaf,
And gazes on the youthful face
That oft recalls the last embrace.
Love's language sweet the tear drops speak
That glisten on her pallid cheek ;
And while for one long lost she yearns,
The thrilling Past to her returns.
She hears the war drum's martial beat,
The stately tramp of loyal feet—
The shout of joy as, from the sea,
Come back the notes of victory !

But now she hears another tread,
And sees the bowed, uncovered head ;
Homeward, behind the muffled drums,
With honor crowned, her hero comes.

She shuts the album, turns away,
And roses twines among the bay;
She kneels with us to cast her wreath
Upon her hero, grand in death.
A mother's heart can ne'er forget:
Treasured are all *his* letters yet,
Yellow, and worn by hands and years;
She loves to dew them with her tears,
Though twenty times on mountain side
The corn has ripened where he died;
Tho' twenty times, where he was slain,
The rose has died and bloomed again.
I call them brave who helped to win
The Sepulcher from Moslem sin—
I call them brave who fearless stood
With Hermann in the German wood,
And in defense of hearth and home,
Beat down the mailed arm of Rome!
But just as brave, aye, braver still,
Was he who stood at Malvern Hill—
Or stormed the gray-winged eagle's nest
Above the clouds on Lookout's crest—
Or fell for right, where fair Santee
Goes singing to the shadeless sea.

We sent our brave Horatii forth
To guard the gateways of the North:

How well each man performed his trust
In volumes speak the heroes' dust,
And Vict'ry, on her burnished shields,
Has graven all their battle fields!
Horatius fought at Mission Ridge;
Horatius stormed Antietam's bridge;
Horatius bled at Champion's Hill;
Horatius won at Bentonville!
For us he poured his crimson tide,
For us without a murmur died.
Above his breast the song birds sing,
Where Nature is eternal spring;
And all the stars keep watch and ward
Above the gallant Union guard.
For him Affection's heart doth yearn,
For Hope will sing of his return.
Yon aged dame, with frosted head,
Can not believe her hero dead;
But waits within her cottage home,
Believing that her boy will come.
Oh, patient heart! no longer wait—
To him no more will swing the gate;
For "missing" means that he has trod
The path of death that leads to God.
He gave, beyond the battle line,
Freedom's immortal countersign,
And pitched his tent on yonder shore,

Where peace is peace for ever more—
Where not a battle drum doth beat,
And not a bugle sounds retreat.

While from our hands the flowers fall,
Think not that *here* are sleeping *all*.
No! far away, by stream and lake,
In sunlit vale, and shady brake,
And on the rugged mountain side,
They rest, who for the Union died!
No bugle's blast nor cannon's roar
Will wake the gallant sleepers more;
Unbroke their dreams by War's halloo,
They fell asleep at Death's tattoo.
Sleep, heroes, sleep! thy sacred dust
Becomes a loyal people's trust.
A thousand years shall come and go,
The tide of Time shall outward flow;
A thousand times upon thy breasts
Fair May will yield her sweet bequests.
Away thy gallant manhood dream,
In tangled wood, by rapid stream,
And in the shadow of the spire,
Kissed by the sun-god's lips of fire.

Sleep on till Time shall yield his sway,
And God proclaims Eternal Day!

Virinius.

ARGUMENT.

About the year 449 B. C., a decemvir of Rome, named Ap-
pius Claudius, through one of his clients, seized upon the per-
son of Virginia, the daughter of Virinius, a plebeian, claiming
her as his slave. The trial took place in the Forum. In the
midst of the proceedings, Virinius arrives from the Roman
camp.

POEM.

A SOLDIER comes : The crowds retreat :
He gives no rest to sandaled feet
Until he in the Forum stands,
With clouded brow and outstretched hands.
Virinius! wearer of the scars,
The badges of ten glorious wars !
A braver Roman never bled,
Nor followed where the eagles led ;
The first to feel the foeman's breath,
The last to leave the field of death ;
If he fell back, his trusty blade
The foe for his misfortune paid.
He knew the phalanx how to form,
How best to meet the battle's storm ;
His eagle eye the first to trace
The Volcii's vulnerable place !

Fresh from the Roman camp he came ;
From lip to lip fast flew his name ;
Some prais'd his bearing, mark'd his eye
That glared at Appius angrily ;
And now and then, at scornful word,
He laid his hand upon his sword.

The farce, not righteous trial, at last
Was ended ; Appius judgment passed—
Fit judgment from so great a knave !
Virginia was decreed a slave.
The unjust sentence shock'd and thrill'd
The crowds that Rome's great Forum fill'd,
And every eye was turned upon
The battle-scarred centurion.
Would he resist ? Aye, would he dare
The mandates of the powers that were ?
Appius was decemvir—great
His power in the Roman state !
So great, indeed, some deemed his nods
As potent as the Olympic God's.
No Roman power could have stayed
The father's temper ; undismayed
He faced the soldiers gathered round,
And boldly stood his chosen ground ;
The silence soon he harshly broke,
And thus in passionate accents spoke :

“A slave? Virginia basely born?
I fling the epithet with scorn
Back to the kennel whence it came;
There let it cower in its shame!
Who says her veins hold servile blood
Lies basely! never flowed a flood
Thro’ gentle veins purer than hers.
I gave it! True blood never errs!
A plebeian? Yes! and, what is more,
Her sires were plebeians of yore;
But they were *free*! Not freer flows
Old Tiber, nor the wind that blows.
For Rome I’ve borne the battle’s brunt;
My sword has flashed along the front;
’Tis known how well, in bygone years,
I broke the Equi’s line of spears—
That it was *I* who mark’d the track
O’er which we drove the Volciaus back;
Who said then—when my flesh was torn
By shafts—that *she* was basely born?
Think you that I had bled for Rome
A helot? and my child at home
A helot’s offspring, Appius? No!
I spurn the accusation low
As Jove’s great bird would spurn the lie
Flung at him by a mean magpie!

Who seeks the cave the whelps to slay
Or steal, but when the lion's away?
Who scales the rugged mountain crest,
To wrench the eaglets from the nest,
But when the mountain monarch flies
Above the clouds that hide the skies?
Sometimes the parent bird or beast
Breaks in upon the spoiler's feast;
Then he who would the eaglets slay,
Must first the parents put away.

“A slave? Virginia is *my* child,
My latest born! her mother smiled
But once upon her ere she died,
And left the infant to my pride.
Her faults, if any, come from me;
Her virtue is that legacy
Left by that mother, whose fair name
In Rome no Roman dares defame!
Think you, Appius, I could give
My child to you and a Roman live,
To see the Romans point with scorn
At me, and call me basely born?
Reverse the judgment you have given
Before I make appeal to heaven.
Back, Guards! Appius hear me thro’—

Hear what Virginius might do,
If you bow down to passions wild
To make a harlot of his child!
Tear down your banners lifted high
Above the plains of victory,
Blot out Algidus's proud name,
Upon whose field of his'tric fame,
The plebeian soldier fought to save
Old Rome, and, dying, to her gave
An everlasting laurel crown,
Which through the ages shall go down,
Bedecked with stars that represent
Her own eternal firmament."
Aye, you may bind the arms that wield
The sling upon the battle field;
Aye, in your palace, you may sneer
At those who point the gleaming spear;
But all the chains that rankle now
Within the dungeons 'neath the brow
Of yonder hill, which you control,
Can never bind a Roman *soul*.
Why rail I thus?

"It were no need!

A slave my child has been decreed,
And that by Rome's acknowledge power,
Prone at whose feet all will must cower.

But let me see my child once more—
Aye, let me taste her lips, before
I give her up!"

Appius said :
"Lead forth the girl ; his will is dead !"

The child appeared—with joyful cry,
She hailed her father eagerly ;
Then forward leapt and sank to rest,
Close to his heaving bosom pressed ;
His helmet drooped, his plumage bold
Fell o'er her like a mist of gold ;
She, in her girlish grace and charms,
Looked like a sunbeam in his arms.
He held her close, nor saw, nor heard
The envied look, the whispered word.
Some said they saw his white lips move
As if he uttered words of love.
If thus he did, 'twas in a tone
Heard by Virginia's ears alone.
At last he started into life ;
His circling glance fell on a knife,
Which thro' the day was wont to lie
Within a butcher's stall hard by :
A moment more, with frenzy wild,
He held the blade above his child !

" 'Tis done!" he cried. "Now, Appius, take
Virginia—mine! Thy passions slake—
But in her blood!"

"My child, we part!"
He drove the keen blade to her heart!

"Hear me, ye gods of Ancient Rome!"
He cried. "I've darkened my own home!
Death to Virginia I have given,
And sent her sinless soul to heaven!
What more than this had I to give
Than see the child, dishonored, live!
Back, guards! I am a Roman, too?
I am a father—so are you!
Now think how soon your daughters' charms
May wither in yon lecher's arms!
Make room!"

Then with majestic tramp
He turned toward the Roman camp,
And reached it safely.

In their might
The people arose and crushed the blight
Of lecherous power, and cleansed the State
Of the accursed Decemvirate!

Thus, long ago, in Rome forlorn,
The knife gave rights to plebeian born!

In Memoriam—Garfield.

HERE is a story, old and grand,
That links my heart to one fair land,
Whose banners droop beyond the wave,
Because we bend at GARFIELD's grave,
And it is this: A grenadier
Of France, in her most favored year,
Resolved to hold a mountain post
Alone against the Austrian host.
He held the place till forced to yield,
And when he fell upon the field—
When Death in battle took his soul,
His name was kept upon the roll;
And when for roll call there appears
A line of stalwart grenadiers,
Checks glow with pride and all thoughts turn
To comrade Latour D'Auvergne,
And as the sergeant speaks his name,
Inscribed upon the the rolls of fame,
A soldier answers him with pride:
"Upon the field of honor died!"
So can we say of him who late
With honor filled the Chair of State—
Thus can we speak of GARFIELD—gone:

“He died with all his armor on,”
Like those who fell that hist'ric day
For Sparta at Thermopylæ.

One year ago a loud refrain,
To-day the solemn funeral train ;
One year ago in manhood's bloom,
To-day for him a martyr's tomb—
And fifty millions drop a tear
Upon our murdered ruler's bier.
Our hero comes, but not as when
He left the State, the choice of men :
He comes to rest his weary frame
Upon the earth he loved to name.
He asks but this ; we grant him more—
The Nation's love from shore to shore !
The hands of Hope now tear apart
The clouds that darken every heart ;
And one bright ray from heaven's Sun
Falls on the dome at Washington—
One precious thought the Present gives :
The Government, thank God ! still lives ;
It lives although its honored head
Beside the lovely lake lies dead ;
It lives because its fabric bright
Is builded on the rock of Right.

No strife of sections rise to-day,
And anarchy is far away :
For North and South, once torn by strife,
Now kneel beside that stricken wife,
Hand clasped in hand upon the lid
'Neath which the Nation's heart is hid.

Now, at this moment, dark indeed,
While hearts of stricken millions bleed,
We think of her whose aged form
Bends like a reed before the storm.
She watched him grow to man's estate,
And choose the paths that made him great.
At Washington she saw him stand,
The chosen chief of Freedom's land.
'Tis Sorrow only that can prove
Or sound the depths of mother-love ;
For while he lingered by the sea,
She waited for him patiently.
How could a mother watch in vain?
She felt that he must come again.
But as she watched beside her door,
Her old eyes glistened more and more.
He came at last, her darling boy,
The Nation's pride, the mother's joy,
But shrouded in the robes of death,

And on his brow a laurel wreath—
A wreath that will outlast the years,
Bedewed by all Columbia's tears.
Though hidden from that mother's eyes,
Beneath the verdant sod he lies,
Within her heart his face so fair
Will linger like a blessed pray'r.

We do not stand alone to-day
Beside our country's cherished clay :
No! in the world's remotest parts
Are misty eyes and stricken hearts,
And nations stretch across the sea
The sister hand of sympathy.
Beneath the palm tree of the coast
The black man mourns a brother lost :
For even he had learned to trace
The paths of him who loved his race.
And England's Queen, so great and good,
Is weeping in her widowhood,
And forth from Windsor's royal bow'rs,
She sends affection's purest flow'rs :
Yes, more than buds, for with them comes
The love of England's mourning homes!
Who dreamt that one man lying low
Would touch the great world's heart strings so?

Who would have said, or who believe,
That earth would with one widow grieve?
The stars of heaven, when they set,
Shine on a country fairer yet?
The flowers that, faded, round us lie
Re-bloom beneath May's tranquil sky!
"There is no death," the poet sings;
All nature with the echo rings.
A man like GARFIELD never dies,
Though silent in his robes he lies:
The name he leaves to you and me
Makes better all humanity.

Let GARFIELD fill, by Erie's wave,
Ohio's grandest, proudest grave!
For him the deathless bay we'll twine,
And Chickamauga's stars will shine;
Beside the dear old Southern river
His spirit shall stand guard forever;
And when the buds and blooms of May
Proclaim our Decoration Day,
We'll weave the fairest wreath that e'er
Was laid upon the soldier's bier,
And o'er his ashes proudly prove
The vastness of a people's love.
Not by one grateful State alone

Shall the proud warrior's wreath be thrown ;
But every State shall lend its bloom
To decorate the hero's tomb.
The little rose that opes again
When spring invades the woods of Maine,
The lilies white that bloom and blow
Where Hudson and Potomac flow,
The wild buds from Nevada's creeks,
And pines from California's peaks,
And blossoms from Virginia's leas,
Kissed by the suns of shadeless seas:
All these shall go to make the wreath
To crown our martyr, great in death.

Sleep on, sweet Prince! at rest from strife;
The world is better for thy life!
Thy praises coming time shall ring,
And Erie will thy requiem sing.
Sweet be thy sleep beneath the sod,
By thee in boyhood often trod:
And while our starry banners wave
"The dear old State" will guard thy grave—
Proud at its head fore'er to stand,
The new Mount Vernon of our land!
SEPTEMBER 21ST, 1881.

The Ida May:

A BALLAD OF THE SEA.

HE'S come at last, my Harold dear,
The boy that sailed away
To foreign seas and foreign lands
In the good ship "Ida May."
Though many told me he was dead,
My heart did not despair;
I know the Father watches o'er
His children every-where.

One day across the waters came
A tale that thrilled my soul—
It told me that the Ida May
Had never reached her goal—
That somewhere in the great North Sea,
Deprived of mast and sail,
The gallant ship and all her crew
Had perished in a gale.

Full many a heart was broken then;
Full many an eye did weep;
The sailor's sweetheart wrung her hands
And sobbed herself to sleep;

The father stood apart from all
And mourned with drooping head;
All day the chapel bells did toll
For Dover's sailor dead.

The summer waned; the maple leaves
Put on their robes of gold;
The biting breezes told us that
The year was growing old.
But still I treasured in my heart
A hope that he would come,
And every night I knelt and prayed
To God to bring him home.

I made him promise when he left
That he would come again,
With stories from the mystic shores
That girt the northern main.
Day after day with rising hopes
I climb the headlands high,
That I might be the very first
The good ship to descry.

Before me stretched a restless surge
As far as eye could see,
With here and there a lonely gull
That screamed most dismally.

The people shook their heads whene'er
I met them on the coast,
In going to and coming from
My lone, unenvied post.

Ah me! they thought me growing mad;
I even heard them say,
In whispers, "He will never see
The flowers bloom in May."
What! never see the harebells blow
Again in yonder glade?
Nor hear the cricket call his mate
Beneath the hawthorn's shade?

But still I watched and trusted on;
The winter fled, and spring
Came back to beautify the earth
With leaf, and flow'r, and wing.
I saw the fragile pansies creep
Once more above the sod,
And ope their little silken hands
In gratitude to God.

But not a pennon flew for me,
And not a sail was spread,
As I stood high 'twixt sea and sky—
With a groundless hope, 'twas said.

A love, whose corner-stone is faith,
Knows neither span nor bound ;
A father's love is like a sea
The plummet can not sound.

I knew that if I waited on,
At last would come a day
When I should hear of him who sailed
In the good ship *Ida May*—
When back from seas that can not drown,
And winds that shriek in vain
Around the rugged northern coast
My boy would come again.

One morning from my lofty post
I saw, amid the gale,
Where skyward leaped the snowy waves,
The glimmer of a sail !
To me it was an angel's wing,
And, as it nearer came,
I stilled my heart that I might read
The noble vessel's name.

On, on it came, a sea-bird white,
With mighty pinions spread ;
Ah ! did she bear unto my soul
A message from the dead ?

No! no! I read upon her brow,
That glad, triumphant day,
The words my eyes had longed to read—
The good name "Ida May!"

And with that proud and gallant ship
There came a father's joy;
For once more in my arms I held
My loved and long-lost boy!
I led him to the rustic seat
Beneath the locust tree,
And listened to the tales he told
Of peril on the sea.

Around us rung the happy bells,
And joyous tears were shed,
As Dover hailed the noble tars
She'd looked upon as dead.
For me the harebells bloomed again
Deep in the sunny glade,
And Harold heard the crickets' notes
Where fell the hawthorn's shade.

Who says they watch in vain who watch
With an unfaltering trust?
For them the sea gives up its dead,
And earth yields more than dust.

So waited I upon the cliff
From weary day to day,
Till Heaven from the icy seas
Sent home the Ida May!



For Disturbin' of the Choir.

'T WAS a stylish congregation, that of Theophratus Brown,
And its organ was the finest and the biggest in
the town,
And the chorus—all the papers favorably com-
mended on it,
For 'twas said each female member had a forty-
dollar bonnet.

Now in the "amen corner" of the church sat
Brother Eyer,
Who persisted every Sabbath-day in singing with
the choir.
He was poor, but genteel-looking, and hair as
snow was white,
And his old face beamed with sweetness when he
sang with all his might.

His voice was cracked and broken, age had touched
his vocal chords,
And nearly every Sunday he would mispronounce
the words

Of the hymns, and 'twas no wonder, he was old
and nearly blind,
And the choir rattling onward always left him
far behind.

The chorus stormed and blustered, Brother Eyer
sang too slow,
And then he used the tunes in vogue an hundred
years ago ;
At last the storm-cloud bursted, and the church
was told, in fine,
That the brother must stop singing, or the choir
would resign.

Then the pastor called together in the vestry-room
one day
Seven influential members who subscribe more
than they pay,
And having asked God's guidance in a printed
pray'r or two,
They put their heads together to determine what
to do.

They debated, thought, suggested, till at last " dear
Brother York,"
Who last winter made a million on a sudden rise
in pork,

Rose and moved that a committee wait at once on
Brother Eyer,
And proceed to rake him lively "for disturbin' of
the choir."

Said he: "In that 'ere organ I've invested quite
a pile,
And we'll sell it if we can not worship in the
latest style;
Our Philadelphy tenor tells me, 'tis the hardest
thing
For to make God understand him when the brother
tries to sing.

"We've got the biggest organ, the dressiest choir
in town,
We pay the steepest sal'ry to our pastor, Brother
Brown;
But if we must humor ignorance because it's blind
and old—
If the choir's to be pestered, I will seek another
fold."

Of course the motion carried, and one day a coach
and four,
With the latest style of driver, rattled up to
Eyer's door;

And the sleek, well-dressed committee, Brothers
Sharkey, York, and Lamb,
As they crossed the humble portal, took good care
to miss the jamb.

They found the church's trouble sitting in his
old arm chair,
And the Summer's golden sunbeam lit his brow
and snowy hair;
He was singing "Rock of Ages" in discordant
voice and low,
But the angels understood him, it was all he cared
to know.

Said York: "We're here, dear brother, with the
vestry's approbation,
To discuss a little matter that affects the congregation;"
"And the choir, too," said Sharkey, giving Brother
York a nudge,
"And the choir, too!" he echoed with the grave-
ness of a judge.

"It was the understandin' when we bargained for
the chorus,
That it was to relieve us—that is, do the singin'
for us;

If we rupture the agreement, it is very plain, dear
brother,
It will leave our congregation and be gobbled by
another.

“We don’t want any singin’ exceptin’ what we’ve
bought!
The latest tunes are all the rage; the old ones
stand for naught;
And so we’ve all decided—are you list’nin’, Brother
Eyer?—
That you’ll have to stop your singin’, for it flurry-
tates the choir.”

The old man slowly raised his head, a sign that
he did hear,
And on his cheek the trio caught the glitter of a
tear;
His feeble hands pushed back the locks white as
the driven snow,
As he answered the committee in a voice both
meek and low:

“I’ve sung the Psalms of David nearly eighty
years,” said he;
“They’ve been my staff and comfort all along life’s
dreary way;

I'm sorry I disturb the choir, perhaps I'm doing
wrong;
But when my heart is filled with praise, I can't
keep back a song.

"I wonder if beyond the tide that's breaking at
my feet,
In the far off heav'nly temple, where the Master I
shall greet—
Yes, I wonder, when I try to sing the songs of
God up high'r,
If the angel band will church me for disturb-
ing heaven's choir."

A silence filled the little room; the old man bowed
his head;
The carriage rattled on again, but Brother Eyer
was dead!
Yes, dead! his hand had raised the vail the future
hangs before us,
And the Master dear had called him to the Ever-
lasting-chorus.

The choir missed him for awhile, but he was soon
forgot,
A few church-goers watched the door: the old man
entered not;

For, where every voice grows sweet and strong,
 he sang his heart's desires,
Where there are no church committees and no
 fashionable choirs!



How Sulla Entered Rome.

[Sulla, "The Butcher," quitted Rome B. C. 82, and marched against Carbo, one of the Marian generals. Taking advantage of his absence, the Samnites and Lucanians, Rome's old enemies, led by Pontius Telesinus, march on the Eternal City, and compel Sulla to "face about," and hasten to its relief. On his way he meets and defeats a Marian contingent, and finally fights for the possession of Rome before the Colline Gate. Some time prior to these events, Sulla's adherents in Rome were butchered by order of Marius. Hence the anxiety of the Mariusites, and Sulla's subsequent retaliation, when he, for the second time, held possession of the city.]

"**N**OW most illustrious augur,
Skilled in thy mystic art,
What dost thou in the entrails see?
And what in bleeding heart?
Say, what hath Fate in store to-day
For hut or villa home?
Will Marius yield?—the bird of prey!
Will Sulla enter Rome?"

Thus spoke old Lars Porcencus,
The senator; he stood
Before the sacred altar where
The dove lay in its blood.

All Rome outside did wait to hear
The answer of the priest,
Who saw the great events to come
In blood of bird and beast.

“Behold! the entrails cease to smoke,
Anew the dove’s heart bleeds!
Woe! woe to Rome! make haste! prepare
For Sulla’s ruthless deeds!
Old Tiber’s wave that bears a stain
Of blood by Marius shed,
Ere darkness folds her sable wings,
May wear a deeper red.”

Strode Lars Porcencus to the door,
On high he held his hand,
And cried: “Let Roman mothers pray
The gods to spare the land!
And guarded well be every bridge
That spans old Tiber’s foam;
Your senate walls will bleed afresh
If Sulla enters Rome!”

All night there was confusion,
And few there were who slept;
The senators in whispers spake,
The most courageous wept;

The mother held her baby
To her breast in villa home,
And shuddered while she prayed the gods
Sulla to keep from Rome.

With morning came a messenger,
His steed with foam was white,
He'd galloped from a field of ruin,
He'd ridden all the night;
And doleful was his tale of war,
Accursed were his words;
For fifty gallant Roman knights
Had fallen on their swords!

And scattered were their legions,
And torn their standards ten;
Beneath the monster Sulla's arch
Had passed five thousand men.
"He comes to Rome!" the courier cried,
"To meet him now prepare;
Although he well knows how to slay,
He never learned to spare!"

To enter Rome the Allies march,
The day is big with fate,
For Pontius would strike a blow
Before it be too late.

The frightened people on the hills,
The watchers on the wall,
See Sulla, like a Nemean lion,
Upon the Samnites fall.

Now, fortune with the parties toys
As winds oft toy with foam,
A fiercer battle never raged
Under the walls of Rome!
Before the wild Lucanians
Sulla's left wing gave way;
And were it not that Crassus fought,
He must have lost the day.

Four times they struck his left wing,
And thrice they smote his right;
But Crassus to the rescue came
And smote with all his might.
Ah! where his eagled helmet shone
Upon the field that day,
And where his ponderous falchion swept,
The foemen thickest lay!

Now, who on all the seven hills,
Would rise to save the state,
Since Sulla's gained a victory
Before the Colline Gate?

And then into the city,
With no one to oppose,
The monster threw his human wolves,
With death to strike his foes.

“Down with the Marian faction!”
This was the constant cry,
And each dread hour new lists came out
To show who were to die.
To check the horrid slaughter
No arbiter appeared:
And Lars Porcencus died that day
With blood upon his beard!

Woe to the plebeian rabble
That called young Marius lord!
Hemmed in like hunted deer, which way
They turned they found a sword;
The highways groaned with slaughter,
And blood was on the walls—
It trickled over marble steps,
And stained the senate halls.

Of Sulla had the courier told
“He never learned to spare;”
He butchered in the market place,
And by the curule chair,

And in the sacred temples,
Thrice barr'd to the profane,
The bloody sword of vengeance smote,
And madly smote again.

Proscription on proscription
Was ordered fierce and fast,
Till fifty thousand Roman knights
Filled up the gap at last.
And scores of graybeard senators
Went murdered to their rest;
And many a Roman baby died
Upon a milkless breast.

For days went on the slaughter,
It leaped from hill to hill,
Nor stopped until, of Sulla's foes,
There were none left to kill.
And then the human tigers,
For want of else to do,
Disputing o'er the crimson spoil,
Each other turned and slew.

Throughout these days of horror,
Friend was by friend betrayed;
For none could fly the city,
Nor 'scape the reeking blade.

And seaward, down the Tiber,
Upon its reddened foam,
Went those whose lips in silence told
“How Sulla entered Rome.”

Then plebeian and patrician
Were buried side by side—
Ay, to the bravest of the brave,
Was sepulchre denied!
In after years, around the hearth
Of hut and villa home,
In whispers was the story told,
“How Sulla entered Rome!”



Ben.

I TOOK a walk last Sunday, Ben,
Through scenes of vanished joys;
The meadows looked as fair as when
We were two romping boys.
Oh, cherished spot! each foot of ground
Remembered was by me,
And in the tangled wood I found
Your name cut in a tree.

It did not stand alone; ah, no!
Another name was there—
The name of one who long ago,
Had wavy chestnut hair.
I recollect the very day
You used your jack-knife, she
Was swinging, Ben, with laughter gay,
Beneath the dear old tree.

Under your name you cut the year,
But Time has rubbed it out;
Rude are the figures that appear—
Their meaning some would doubt.

The golden hours of boyhood's store
Came rushing back to me,
The moment that I paused before
Your name cut in the tree.

The patter of our playmate's feet,
I heard the while I stood
Beneath the tree, and laughter sweet
With music filled the wood.
I seemed to be a boy again,
And all because, you see,
I found your name last Sunday, Ben,
Cut in the beachen tree.

Don't ask me whether *she's* forgot
The days of long ago:
Deep in *her* heart there is a spot
Kept green for us. I know
She was a child, and had her whims,
She has them yet, I see;
She calls her youngest "Ben," for him
Whose jack-knife marred the tree!

Ah! Ben, the leafy path that led
From school-house dear to swing,
Seemed fringed with graves of playmates dead,
And by the mossy spring

I plucked two tiny woodland flow'rs
That bloomed alone for me—
A tribute to the happy hours
We've spent beneath the tree.

I wished for you last Sunday, Ben,
While in the matted wood,
Upon the cherished spot again,
Contemplative I stood;
And all alone, within the shade,
Refreshing, cool, and free,
I blessed the living and the dead
We loved beneath the tree.

Oh, what is sweeter than the thought,
Of boyhood's stainless bliss?
Golconda's gems have never bought
A pleasure rich as this!
Why, Ben, they call me old to-day,
Because I'm thirty-three!
And twenty years have passed away
Since we played 'neath the tree.

A few more fleeting years at best,
A few more day-dreams; then
We'll sink into that peaceful rest,
That dreamless slumber, Ben.

But when God dissipates the mist
Of death, we'll rise to see
The playmates whom we loved and kiss'd
Beneath the dear old tree.



The House where I was Born.

I SEE it often in my dreams,
The dearest spot I know—
The house in which I saw the light
One winter long ago.
And 'neath its hallowed roof I stood
With pride but yester morn,
And asked God's richest blessings for
The house where I was born.

Time heavily his hand has laid
On threshold, wall, and roof;
But every spot is dear to me—
Love will not keep aloof.
It twines its tendrils round the place
Remembered, but forlorn,
And showers benedictions on
The house where I was born.

I took a cool drink from the spring,
Whose waters are as clear
To-day as when I knew them in
Childhood's initial year.

But, ah! the face reflected there
Travel and years have worn :
'T was not the same that brightened once
The house where I was born.

Its memory is sweet to me,
Such memories never fade !
I stood beside the apple-tree
In whose refreshing shade
I sported, in the matchless flush
Of youth's far-spreading morn,
And plucked the golden fruit that filled
The house where I was born.

A mother's thoughts were with me there,
And mine were far away :
Beyond the hills, she wonders how
The " old home " looks to-day.
Then I my heart's best blessings sent,
O'er mountains lone and lorn,
To her who gently rocked me in
The house where I was born.

May Heaven's choicest blessings be
Upon it ever shed !
God bless the old home's living friends ;
God rest its cherished dead !

Oh! long ago a baby face
Lay pallid there one morn,
For death had crossed the threshold of
The house where I was born.

If Time should have in store for me
The dreary walks of age,
Oh, never may his hands destroy
Fair Recollection's page!
No! let me deep within my heart,
Despite a cold world's scorn,
Embalm in Memory and Love,
The house where I was born.
MIDDLETOWN, MD., 1882.



Ajalon.

ALL day through the valley of Ajalon flowed
The red tide of battle, and evening showed
How thick and how bloody, upon the fair grass,
The dead lay unburied in Beth-horon's pass!

The armies of Israel, at Gibeon's call,
In thousands came up from the camps at Gilgal;
In thousands they came, with the sling and the
sword,
To punish in battle the foes of the Lord.

And high in the heavens the fast-rolling sun
Obeys the command of the soldier of Nun;
And the Queen of the skies, in vestments so pale,
Has stopped in her course over Ajalon's vale.

The Amorite mother is watching afar
For the coming of those she sent to the war;
And high on the hill-tops of Hebron, the lass
Looks long for the lover in Beth-horon's pass.

The damsels of Jarmuth may wail in despair;
The beauties of Eglon their tresses may tear;

To the caves of Makkedah the princes have fled ;
And the pride of the army in Ajalon's dead !

The hailstones of heaven Jehovah hath thrown,
And the arm of His might hath protected his own ;
The brooks of Azekah all crimson doth flow,
And the palace of Lachish is darkened with woe.

And the feast that was spread in the valley so fair,
Where the olives of Hebron perfume the pure air,
Shall be eaten in tears ; and the soft-speaking lute,
And the cymbals of triumph, forever are mute !

Woe ! woe ! to the heathen who trod in the path
That led to the bolts of God's terrible wrath !
In Ajalon's vale they lie dead on the grass ;
And their shields are their coffins in Beth-horon's
pass !



Friar Justin.

THERE is a legend, quaintly told
In a musty volume, worn and old,
Whose richest part is its clasp of gold,

Of a monk who laid his cowl aside,
Whene'er he knelt, with humble pride,
Low at the feet of the crucified.

Summer and winter, all the same,
Into the cloister softly came
A wondrous light which none could name.

With holy beauty it clothed the scene,
The kneeling monk and his missal; e'en
The thorny crown of the Nazarene.

It was because, when he went to pray,
He put all thoughts of the world away,
And saw but Christ in the cloister gray.

His brother monks with eager ear,
Knelt at the cloister door, to hear
Friar Justin pray at even clear.

They saw the light, but knew not why
It came to him, but passed them by—
To them it was a mystery.

His Christ was theirs; his creed their creed;
Their missals, too, they loved to read,
And zealously tell every bead.

One eve Friar Justin went to pray
In the little cloister, damp and gray,
As he had done for many a day:

Lo! the holy light, of heaven born,
Lay not upon the gray walls lorn,
Nor on the spear wound and the thorn.

Friar Justin looked and held his breath;
Then cried: "O, Christ of Nazareth,
Have I offended thee?—then, death."

And then he thought how all that day
Near his heart a worldly image lay—
A face he once had put away:

A woman's face, so very fair,
Cheeks reddened by the mountain air,
And lips that loved to whisper pray'r.

Into the cloister he had brought
A thought of her—a worldly thought—
Heedless of lessons Christ had taught.

He then knew why the holy light
Had fled and left him in the night,
Vailing the Virgin's child from sight.

"Thy will be done!" Friar Justin said,
As to the stones he bowed his head :

* * * * *
They found him in the morning—dead !

On wound of nail, and spear, and thorn,
And on his features fair as morn,
Fell that sweet light of heaven born.

The pages of that old book tell
How other monks prayed in his cell ;
But not on them the soft light fell.

Friar Justin's memory still is green ;
'Tis said that he is often seen
At the feet of the Nazarene !

This is the legend, quaintly told
In the musty volume, worn and old,
Whose richest part is its clasp of gold.

To the First Snow Flake.

WHERE is thy home? In yonder star
That shines so bright,
Beyond the night—
Beyond this rolling planet—far
Away where all the sinless are?

From head to foot in pure samite
Thy form is clad,
And I am glad
To see thee sailing thro' the night,
Close to my window to alight.

Where is the song I'd have thee sing—
The song that cheers
Me through the years—
And joys unnumbered to me bring?
Say, where is it, wee, winsome thing?

Come in! the winds are blowing cold!
My fire burns bright
To cheer the night:
Thy figure in my hand I'll hold,
And keep thee safe as precious gold.

Art thou asleep? I'd touched thy face
 (Call me not bold)—
 'Tis white and cold ;
But beautiful and full of grace,
With features of the angel race.

But where art thou, my snowy dove?
 A tear drop calm
 Lies in my palm ;
But thou hast ta'en thy flight above—
Forsook me, like a woman's love !



Mabel Clare.

IN my palm to-night is lying
Golden hair ;
And a weary heart is sighing,
Mabel Clare.

And the past is rushing o'er me—
Past so fair ;
And the future looms before me,
Mabel Clare :

Looms before me like a shadow
Gaunt and bare—
Stripped of every El Dorado,
Mabel Clare.

Forgive me, as thou art forgiven,
Is my pray'r ;
Earth to us was once a heaven,
Mabel Clare.

But a lie, well coined and uttered,
Would not spare ;
Base-born Slander more than muttered,
Mabel Clare.

I will not believe thee, woman,
False as fair ;
We are weak, for we are human,
Mabel Clare.

By the hopes that long have perished,
Love, I swear—
By the future dearly cherished,
Mabel Clare—

That in all the dark forever,
And despair
Of the soul, I'll love thee ever,
Mabel Clare !

"When this Heart is not at Home."

I AM sitting at my window,
And the breezes, cool and free,
Through the trees that kiss my sanctum,
Sing a soothing melody.
I have dropped the pen of labor,
I have shut the heavy tome;
You would think that I am dreaming,
For my heart is not at home.

It has wandered down the distant
Aisles of unremembered years—
Down among the smiles of boyhood—
Down among my childish tears;
And beside life's heaving ocean,
On the breakers lashed to foam—
'Mong a youth time's shattered idols,
Is the poor lone heart at home!

What is life that we should love it
If our hearts have not returned
To the Edens left behind us—
To some ashes we have urned?

From the sun-bright land of promise
Did the thoughts of Israel roam,
To the smiles that lightened bondage
In "the old Egyptian home!"

Little hands are always waiting,
Little wings are ever near,
Back into the past we cherish,
Messages of love to bear;
And to-night I sit and send them
Through my boyhood's groves to roam:
Do not think that I am dreaming,
No! my heart is not at home.

By and by, from distant meadows,
It will come back, all aglow;
And the scent of clover blossoms
Will be on it, well I know:
It will bring the touch of fingers
That doth harp in heaven's dome;
And the laughter of old playmates—
When my truant heart comes home!

It will come back, richly laden,
Like an Orient argosy,
With the wealth of distant countries,
That are known to only me:

In the port of peace and pleasure
I will furl the sails that roam ;
And I'll gladly cast the anchors
When my heart-ship has come home !



A Fancy.

MY heart bedight
With joy to-night,
Is eager for a fancy flight:
My spirit drifts
Among the rifts
Of each dark cloud that o'er me lifts.

At my command,
Across life's sand,
Blow spicy gales from Samarcand:
The thoughts that rise
To night I prize
Far more than glance from woman's eyes;

The harp I tune
To simple rune,
Is like a throstle's song in June—
So rich and free
In melody,
No dreamer's idle fantasy.

If I could sit
Whence star-beams flit
Here in this chamber, dimly lit—

Night after night,
By heaven's light,
How often would my soul take flight!

Take flight, and seek
Some lofty peak,
Not mirrored in the trysting creek;
But in the skies,
And in the eyes,
That mirage love's true imag'ries.

Away! away!
All thoughts of day,
That bringeth labor with its gray;
My Fancy takes
Her flight, and slakes
Her thirst in the poetic lakes.

The Losing of the Bells.

HA! ha! it was a merry time,
I never can forget,
We played the *roles* of belle and beau—
The memory lingers yet.
That lovely winter Sunday night
All other night excels;
For then along the snowy road,
You know we lost the bells.

The moon was up, the stars were out,
How deep the spotless snow!
It was the prime of sleighing time,
The wind was cold and low.
And now, as I recall the past,
My heart with rapture swells;
I know you never will forget
The night we lost the bells.

How strange that we should miss the sound
That crisp night in December!
What were we doing? Let me see:
I really don't remember.

But well I know a fickle strap
The story oft retells;
And marks an era in our lives—
The losing of the bells.

I may forget some happy days,
I may forget the time
When life was naught but love to me,
And fancies ran in rhyme;
But Mem'ry's shore for me is strewn
With most exquisite shells;
The fairest one I gather, is
The losing of the bells!

I'll cherish it through all the time
That God hath marked to me,
A flower in life's desert drear—
A pearl beside the sea!
And each fair snow-flake as it falls
The good old story tells.
How many snows have melted since
The night we lost the bells!

You and I.

YE are blithe and gay to-day,
Flowers bloom along life's way,
And the gentle winds that blow
Whisper sweet, in voices low ;
But there surely comes a time
When, in this resplendant clime,
Where the human heart beats high,
None will mention You and I.

Other feet will press the sod
Of the valleys we have trod ;
Other hands will pluck the rose
Where for us to-day it grows.
When a few more years have fled,
O'er us 'mong the silent dead,
Who will stand where we shall lie
And drop a tear for You and I ?

None! The world will onward move ;
Love will false and faithful prove ;
God will reign, for God is just ;
Nations will return to dust.

Thousands, in life's eager race,
Oft will pass our resting place ;
But, of all who hurry by,
None will think of You and I.

Dreamless of the cares of life—
Heedless of its busy strife—
Silent in the narrow home,
To whose portals all must come,
We shall rest, no more to wake
Till the glorious morn shall break :
'Neath the same soft summer sky
We will slumber—You and I.

May the soul, that pines and sings,
Seek its God on eager wings—
Upward to the realms of day,
From its prison house of clay.
For beyond Thought's grandest flight—
Far above the stars of night—
May we, in the by and by,
Safely anchor—You and I.

Garibaldi and the Bird.

AT ease the grizzled veteran lay
Upon his dying bed;
The sun upon his latest day
A ling'ring radiance shed.
Above him hung the weapon bright
That never knew a stain—
The sword that won Milazzo's fight,
In Freedom's best campaign.

That sword had traced a soldier's name
On Honor's fadeless sky;
His hand had crowned with wreaths of Fame
His cherished Italy.
No more upon the field he'd meet
The noble and the brave,
For soon the muffled drums would beat
The long march to the grave.

Within his room no sound was heard,
His mourning friends were still,
When all at once a little bird
Flew to his window sill,

And perching there, a matchless song
Poured from her tiny throat,
And thrilled the silent, weeping throng
With every heav'n-sent note.

The dying soldier raised head,
And seemed to hold his breath:
"How joyous is the bird," he said,
"She sings to me in death!"
And when the last note died away
Beyond the hero's bed,
All pallid, Garibaldi lay
Among his comrades—dead!

Away the little warbler flew
To sing above her nest;
The soldier's sad attendants drew
The shroud across his breast.
And stole away, and left him there,
So cold, and still, and white;
And mourning Freedom breathed a pray'r
For his repose that night.

Ah! sweeter than the clash of steel
Beloved by him of yore,
And grander than the cannon's peal
That shook the foeman's shore,

Were the sweet notes that richly rung
In his soul that eventide;
For heaven sent the bird that sung
When Garibaldi died.



Alexander.

'**H**IS o'er. Into the palace steal
The moonbeams robed in gold ;
They fall upon the pallid face
Of Alexander cold.
Is this the man by nations cursed ?
The petted child of Fame—
Who wrote upon the earth in blood
Arbela's tuneful name?

Is this the chief, at whose command
Red ran the lucent wave—
Who raised the golden goblet high,
And drank to earth—his slave ?
Ah ! who is fit to fill the throne
Of Philip's warrior son ?
As harmless as the lamb, now lies
The Lion of Macedon !

His pallid lips no more will taste
The wine that fired his brain :
His icy cheeks will never feel
Love's burning kiss again !

The arm that struck the nations low,
In battle red and wild,
Is helpless now ; it could not wrong
The Indoo mother's child.

Lift up your heads, ye nations all,
That bent to him the knee ;
Lift up your heads and shout for joy
From Issus to the sea.
Fear not the Siren at his couch,
Whose false tears fall like rain ;
For her no gods will call to life
Earth's incubus again.

And, satraps, gather round the chief
Who gave ye each a crown ;
The scepters that ye hold aloft
May soon be stricken down.
The guarantees you boast
Have vanished with the sun ;
The vanquisher of all the world
Lies dead in Babylon !

Let Alexander sleep death's sleep—
His sweetest since his birth ;
No longer earth had need of him —
And he, is done with earth.

Now, satraps, leave the royal dead,
No longer to him cower ;
Back to your states, and fight again,
Like famished wolves, for power.



Octavia.

ARE they true—those dreadful tidings
By the east winds to me borne?
Have thy locks, grown long in battle,
By the siren's hands been shorn?
In my dreams I often see thee,
When the clouds above me meet,
Not in battle with thy legions—
But, at Cleopatra's feet!

When the children ask about thee,
Pointing to thy honored sword,
And the wreaths bestowed by Romans
On my Antony and lord—
I, with heart most at the breaking,
Answer them: "He is afar;"
And I tell them of their father,
And his glorious deeds in war.

Could my head but press the bosom
Where so often it hath lain!
Could I see the Roman people
Crown thy brow with bay again!

Hark! the children, in their slumbers
Turning, gently lisp thy name,
While I turn away in sorrow,
Thinking only of my shame.

Not a drop of blood ignoble
In the veins of thee and thine!
Never sprung a tainted fountain
From the hearts of me and mine!
I am calling from my pillow,
Bear me witness, God above,
That I never proved unfaithful
To the soldier whom I love!

Hear the pleading of Octavia;
From the siren's land return,
Where the bosom heaves with passion,
And the eyes with passion burn.
Leave the dusky slave of Isis;
Get thee from her witching smile;
Cheer the heart beside the Tiber—
Leave the charmer of the Nile.

To the arms that long to greet thee,
From the false Egyptian fly!
Break the spell of Orient passion!
Be Octavia's, Antony!

And a Roman wife's forgiveness,
And a Roman matron's kiss
Shall be thine, if thou but turnest
From the serpent and her hiss.



Give me Back my Legions.

[It is said that for months after the defeat of the Roman legions led by Varus, the constant cry of the emperor Augustus was: "Quintilius Varus, give me back my legions!"]

GIVE me back my legions, Varus!
Let me see them proudly march,
Covered with the spoil of battle,
Under the triumphal arch.
From the dark Germanic forests
Lead my gallant vet'rans home;
By the gods do I adjure thee!
Varus, bring them back to Rome.

Can it be that I shall never
Hear again their stately tread,
Till my pale ghost stops and listens
In the dim aisles of the dead?
No! the wild barbarian passes
Where the gaunt wolf makes his track,
Can not hide for e'er my eagles;
They *shall* give my legions back!

With a wild, insatiate murmur,
Past my throne old Tiber sweeps,
And the base-born Roman plebeian
Sweeter than Augustus sleeps.

Dreams of armies haunt my slumbers ;
High th' imperial eagles fly !
How the shields and helmets glisten
As the ghostly ranks go by !

Give me back my legions, Varus,
Round their eagles lying low,
Where the German wolf, Arminius,
Dealt to Rome the fatal blow :
In the bleak Hyrcanian passes
Cunningly the snare was set ;
Oh ! the lie that led them onward
Shall the sword of Vengeance whet !

Give me back my father's soldiers !
Bring the Sons of Victory home !
Once more let Numonius Vala
Speed his blooded barb thro' Rome.
All the day do Roman mothers
Watch for thee upon the walls :
Varus, give me back my legions !
'Tis thy emperor who calls.

Did I give them to thee, Varus,
In the German woods to die ?
No ! I bade thee lead them onward,
As of old, to victory.

Thou thy sacred trust hast broken
On barbarian battle-fields;
And the flower of my army,
Bleeding, lie upon their shields.

By the blood of conscript fathers!
By the ashes of our sires!
By the swords that won at Zama!
By our altars and our fires—
From the blood-drenched German valleys,
From the forests cursed and black,
Ere the gods of Vengeance smite thee,
Varus, bring my legions back!



Vandyke's New-Year's Leaf.

HAVE you heard of the leaf that Vandyke
Turned one stormy New-Year's night,
Alone in his cozy parlor seated—
In the coal fire's mellow light?
If you have not, I will tell you
In a rhyme that shall be brief,
Though I fear he will not thank me
For this tale of his New-Year's Leaf.

He was a devotee of Fashion—
Did not care for pounds or pence;
Feted all who won his favor—
Spendthrift in the widest sense!
Though a lion in upper-tendom,
He would win no heart by stealth,
And 't was said by hundreds, daily:
“Beggars steal Hugh Vandyke's wealth.

“Charity is Vandyke's failing,
It will ruin the man some day;
Never from his door a beggar
Almsless has he turned away.”

And they came from every quarter
Of the great commercial mart,
A despised and tattered legion—
Pensioners on Vandyke's heart.

“Too much money to the beggars,
All around me people say ;
And to-night but fifty dollars
Have I for the coming day.
Fifty dollars ! what a trifle !
Twenty more I might have had,
Had I from my door this morning
Almsless sent that whining lad.

“This is New-Year's night—a new leaf
I will turn and keep it down ;
During this year not a dollar
To the whiners of the town !”
And that night he turned his new leaf
Smoking by his roaring fire ;
Heard the snow against his window—
Heard the storm winds mounting high'r.

All at once a low rap started
Vandyke from his reverie,
And he left his cozy arm-chair,
Indignation in his eye.

"'T is a whiner," he was saying,
As he opened wide the door;
Was it a specter he confronted?
Pallid face, and nothing more!

Said a low voice: "Mother's dying!
When for her the angels come,
They will shiver o'er her pillow—
For no fire burns in our home."
"Let her ——," Vandyke paused abruptly,
Took the child, so wan and fair,
Drew her in and shut the portal,
Sat her in his easy chair;

Chafed her hands, and clothed her warmly,
All unfinished left his curse;
Sent her to the dying mother
With the contents of his purse.
And he smiled as he dismissed her—
"She, a 'whiner of the town!'
Where's my New-Year's Leaf?" he murmured,
"I could never keep it down!"

Then he moved his ancient arm-chair
Closer to the roaring fire;
Heard the angels' benedictions—
Heard the mad winds mounting high'r.

In the golden-tinted firelight,
 Dreaming like a child, he slept ;
No man's New-Year's night was sweeter
 Than the one Hugh Vandyke kept.



Napoleon's Last Dream.

[Napoleon's last word is said to have been, "JOSEPHINE."]

IN his lonely rock-bound prison,
Stormed and battered by the sea,
Past fore'er his days of glory,
Dies the Child of Destiny;
And the few who stand beside him,
Watching closely, hold their breath,
Whilst the nations wait impatient
For the mighty captive's death.

Lift the curtain! let him once more
See the mellow springtime skies;
Let the breezes of Old Ocean
Kiss his forehead as he dies.
He is still thy captive, Europe;
Still the billows round him roll;
But to-night, between thy sentries
There shall pass a human soul!

What is it his lips are saying,
As he mutters in his sleep?
Bend ye low, and catch the whispers—
Words for centuries to keep.

Even Europe's captive eagle,
Torn, insulted, triumphs now;
For the jealous nations fear him,
With the death damp on his brow.

Does he dream of kingdoms riven,
Empires crushed, and shattered thrones?
Burning cities, trampled harvests?
Does he hear a people's groans?
No! the hand of Mem'ry leads him
Back to long-forgotten scenes;
And he wanders thro' Malmaison,
With his hand in Josephine's.

Wagram, Waterloo forgotten,
Austerlitz by memory spurned;
From the Pyramids of Egypt,
Crowned with vict'ry, he has turned;
And before his cast-off Empress,
Blushing like a boy, he stands,
Looking into eyes that glisten
With the love of Creole lands.

Who would rob him of the pleasures,
And the dream of manhood past?
Let him feel, once more, the moments
That were all too sweet to last—

When *her* eyes to him were brighter
Than his proud ascendant star,
And the burning kiss she gave him
Dearer than the pomp of war.

Let him gather love's sweet flowers
Ere the stars of glory set,
And that he is Europe's captive
Let Napoleon forget.
Malice, scorn, contempt, and triumph,
Turn ye from this sacred scene,
Nor disturb the soldier's vision
Of his long lost Josephine.

* * * * *

All is o'er! another record
Has been writ beyond the sky;
But the last dream of the soldier,
Like a good deed, will not die.
When his battles are forgotten,
Love will keep his memory green—
For he touched a great world's heart strings
When he murmured, "JOSEPHINE!"

Lady Jane Grey.

THE golden dials of the sky proclaimed the
midnight hour,
And fifty sleepless sentinels kept watch within
the Tow'r;
They represented Mary's hate, and Bloody Mary's
pow'r.

And as they paced their ceaseless rounds, steel clad,
and arms agleam,
For polished casque and halberd threw back every
starry beam,
They thought that in her narrow cell my Lady
Jane did dream.

But no! she at the window stood, with lovely face
and white,
And never looked more like a queen than on that
fateful night;
Upon her like a blessing fell the tremulous star-
light.

The light of trust was in her eyes that sought the
starry plain,

The snowy collar at her throat as yet wore no red
stain,

Fear not! the ax means life fore'er, O, guiltless
Lady Jane:

"Oh, England! fairest land on earth," she spoke
in accents low,

"To-morrow from thy lovely scenes unfettered I
shall go—

No more to greet thy crystal rills that musically
flow:

"No more on Surrey's sunny slopes to hear the
gay birds sing,

No more from meadows rich in bloom to see the
lark take wing,

No more to drink from Guilford's hand cool water
from the spring.

"To-morrow let the sunshine fall upon the forest's
sheen,

And let it be the fairest day my troubled soul has
seen—

To-morrow morn the headsman's ax shall make
me more than queen.

“A richer heritage than this is waiting for me
now,
A brighter crown than England's soon will rest
upon my brow;
And I will hail as rest and peace the block to
which I bow.

“They made me queen all for a week, and decked
me with a crown,
But treason stood behind my throne, and sorrow
weighed me down;
And all the while cried for my blood the rabble
of the town.

“This blessed night I put away the vanities of
earth;
I cast Ambition's robes aside as things of little
worth;
The heart so gay a year ago a stranger is to
mirth.

“But yet it beats for joy beneath Anticipation's
sway,
I stand upon the threshold of a brighter, better
day,
And greet the dawning of a peace no ax can take
away.

“Farewell, oh, happy English race, whose name
with pride I own!
Forget the queen of one brief week who stands to-
night alone,
And loyal be to her who sits upon great Henry’s
throne.

“To-morrow to the somber block and then to re-
gions blest,
To-morrow in a better land to lie on Guilford’s
breast,
To-morrow night this aching heart fore’er will be
at rest.”

She ceased, but in the corridor was heard the sen-
try’s tread,
As back and forth he made his way with proud,
uplifted head,
Nor thought of her who soon would sleep under
the roses red.

The morrow came! the sunshine fell upon the
forest’s sheen,
My Lady Jane walked forth alone with calm and
stately mien,
And sure enough the headsman’s ax did make
her more than queen!

It.

BRIGHT the stars o'er head to night,
Nature lieth cold and white
Neath her coverlet of snow;
Sleeps the wind in valley low:
At the casement lone I stand,
Firelight falls on face and hand;
To the past my thoughts are straying,
And my lips are ever saying:
 "If we had never met,
 There had been no regret."

If I to the hearthstone turn,
Where the oak sticks fiercely burn,
Pictures in the fire I see—
Ghosts of my heart's misery.
And the scent of faded bloom
Comes like incense from a tomb;
Whilst delusive hopes, at call,
Dance like shadows on the wall:
 "If we had ne'er been born,
 Two hearts had not been torn."

By the leaflet's drooping lid,
Oftentimes the thorn is hid ;
When the frost to gold turns green,
Is the hidden brier seen.
Fickle sunshine, for a day,
Dissipates the shadows gray.
Are regrets, remorse, and strife,
Natural parts of earthly life ?
 " If we'd been with self content,
 There had been no banishment."

But a gem of Beauty shines
In the rubbish of the mines ;
Never is the sky, I ween,
So cloud cast that no star is seen.
Memory, as she flieth back
O'er the poor heart's ruin and wreck,
Finds a flow'r whose colors bright
Mock the loveliness of night :
 " If to love we had not striven,
 We had never tasted Heaven."

The Seneschal.

OVER many leagues of Rhineland
Hung the somber pall of death ;
Gloomy looked the vales of wineland,
Smitten by its breath.

Dead the count fell at the festal
In the morning of his time ;
Stricken lay the blooming vestal,
Died the harper with his rhyme.

In a castle, clothed in splendor,
Morunberg's seneschal lay ;
Knightly earls and maidens tender
From the dying keep away.

Through the hours, long and dreary
Back his thoughts to boyhood ran ;
And the winds said : "*Miserere!*"
"*Miserere!*" sighed the man.

He had read, in days departed,
In a volume, vellum-bound,
Iron-clasped and yellow-hearted,
In the turret's rubbish found—

And this book by crumbled friar,
Who in prophecy did delve,
Told him that there should expire
Seneschal at stroke of twelve.

So the old seneschal, lying
In the lofty tower alone,
Slowly, with the hours dying,
Sealed his lips and made no moan,

Till he saw, by flash of lightning,
Morunberg's encrusted dial;
And his face, a moment bright'ning,
Showed him ready for the trial—

For the greatest trial that ever
Came to man in castle tow'r;
(Legends tell how he forever
Keeps at bay the midnight hour.)

He would mock the volume musty,
Once the apple of his eye—
Mock the friar's stylus rusty,
Make his prophecy a lie!

From his cot of cold straw springing,
Madly leaped the dying man,

O'er the floor his bare feet ringing,
As toward the clock he ran.

Wide he threw the portal oaken,
As it ne'er was thrown before;
And the rusted hinges, broken,
Let it fall upon the floor.

Tick! a-tick! the old clock's clanging
Changed its echoes to a hum;
For the seneschal was hanging
To the mighty pendulum!

To and fro its power swayed him,
Striking twelve, but no one heard;
Its mad beatings undismayed him:
He had mocked the friar's word!

When emboldened butler found him,
Stormy winds were mounting high'r;
And the lightning, playing round him,
Made the turret seem on fire.

Still the seneschal was clinging
To the rusted iron rod,
In its narrow prison swinging—
Ticking centuries to God.

Long the guardians of the vineyards,
In their huts upon the hill,
With the watchers of the swine herds,
Wondered why the clock was still.

Story tells that in the tower,
To this very modern day,
Never strikes the midnight hour,
For the old seneschal gray :

And the peasants see him clinging
To the rusted pendulum ;
Swinging, ever ceaseless swinging,
Far above the donjon glum !



The Missing Fleet.

THREE merry blue-eyed lassies,
Three little boys so fair,
One Christmas day to grandpa came,
And smoothed his snowy hair;
And sweet requests for a story
He heard on every hand:
“Tell us a tale of the ocean!”
“Tell us a tale of the land!”
And the yule sticks on the hearthstone,
Made many a ruddy brand.

Grandpa smiled and kissed them,
And thought a little while;
What story could an old man tell
To please a little child?
He thought of happy holidays
In the old-time long ago,
When he was strong, before his hair
Was white as driven snow;
And while he thought, the children rocked
Him gently to and fro.

At last he started up, and said :

“ A story of the sea
I'll tell to you, my children dear,
Whose hearts are light and free ;
And if I weep, you will forgive
The tears that foolish seem ;
For grandpa's lost a noble boy,
Whom time can not redeem ;
And the story of 'The Missing Fleet'
I often think a dream.

“How many a dismal secret
Lies buried in the sea !
The waves, white-crested, cover
Full many a mystery.
I'll tell of three good vessels,
Named the 'Triple Stars,'
That sailed away with a million
In shining silver bars ;
Out of port with a million
In shining silver bars !

“Where float their lovely banners
No mortal man can say ;
For none hath seen their snowy sails
For many a weary day ;

And grandpa sits and watches
Every night, beneath the stars,
For the boy who sailed with a million
In gleaming silver bars;
Over the sea with a million,
In solid silver bars.

“The captains’ wives are sighing,
The sailors’ orphans moan;
For Fate has left them ever
To fight the world alone.
No more to the cosy Bethels
Come the gallant tars,
Who shipped with the precious million,
In beaten silver bars—
Sailed with the wealth of a nation
In heavy silver bars!

“Brave men have sought the vessels,
But all, alas! in vain;
Their pennons, masts, and snowy sails,
Will ne’er be seen again.
Perhaps in unknown oceans,
Still float the broken spars
Of the fleet that sailed with the million
In costly silver bars;

Sailed with the toil of many years
In massive silver bars.

“Where is the fleet this Christmas tide?
My boy, oh! where is he?
Say, does he sleep on coral reef
Down in the surging sea?
Beneath the waves are resting
The gallant ‘Triple Stars;’
And the mermaids sport with the million
In snow-white silver bars—
Deck their homes with a million
In long-lost silver bars.”

* * * * *
Thus grandpa told his story,
One beauteous Christmas day;
The children dear, with one accord,
Kissed his tears away;
For many fell for the noble boy—
His long lost Alevs,
Who sleeps in the sea with a million
In precious silver bars:
Sweet be his sleep with the million
In glistening silver bars!

The March of the Warrior Dead.

IN many a valley broad and fair,
On many a hist'ric plain,
The warrior dead of olden time
Spring into life again :
I see their gallant columns form,
I hear their martial tread ;
Oh ! what a sight for mortal eyes—
The march of the warrior dead !

They rise who fought with Cœur de Lion
In Palestine, and well ;
The steel clad knights of Agincourt
March with the men of Tell ;
And yonder forms a martial host,
Immortalized by pen—
Three hundred spears are shining in
Thermopylæ's dark glen.

Behold ! amid the flowers that bloom
Upon Arbela's banks,
A spectral Alexander forms
His Macedonian ranks ;

And as the mighty columns wheel,
A distant bugle calls;
And thirty thousand Austrians march
From Prague's beleaguered walls.

The earth is shaking 'neath their tread,
As it hath shook before;
And fast upon the boreal blast
Fly sounds of Northern war.
Ten thousand swords amid the snow
Do shine like drops of rain,
And Charles the Twelfth is marshaling
His valiant Swedes again.

What corp'ral guard is trampling down
The slender blades of grass
That have for centuries been green,
In Uri's darkest pass?
Their tread is faint, but Freedom hears,
And, smiling, turns to see
The men who broke the Austrian yoke—
The men who would be free.

Now yonder come ten thousand steeds—
A whirlwind on its course—
And Massinissa leads once more
His wild Numidian horse.

And from the fields where lilies bloom
 Upon the soldier's breast,
Full twenty thousand troopers ride,
 Behind Murat's white crest!

On Leuthen's red, immortal plain—
 To-day a flowery mead—
I see the men who faltered not
 When Frederick deigned to lead :
And yonder, through a winter's night,
 I see an army dim,
And hear ten thousand soldiers chant
 Old Luther's battle hymn.

And lo! beneath yon pale young moon
 Six ghostly armies march ;
They are the legions of old Rome
 Who won the Triumph Arch.
Above their heads their eagles fly,
 As on with pride they come,
Flushed with the laurels of Philippi—
 The spoil of Actium !

Oh! what a sight! my heart beats fast—
 My eyes grow moist with tears!
To see those ranks 'tis worth a life
 Of twenty thousand years.

Ha ! there they fade, like specters grim,
Across the length'ning plain ;
Now they are gone, those gallant ghosts—
Back to the dead again !



The Valley of Shadow.

THERE'S a far-away Valley of Shadow,
Where the hemlocks are blasted and bare;
The bloom of the Mind's El Dorado,
Withered and frosted lie there.
There the loves of a youth-time are buried,
There the graves of Affection are made;
And the cares of the heart that is wearied
Repose in the Valley of Shade.

In the depths of that mystical valley,
No sunshine of hope ever falls;
But chilling winds constantly dally
With the ivy that covers its walls.
No happiness enters its portal,
Its innermost aisles to illumine;
To the ken of the curious mortal,
It is shut, like the doors of a tomb.

The people who dwell in that valley
Are the ghosts of the dead hopes of years;
The breezes that over it dally
Blow on me the moisture of tears.

When frosted and white are thy meadows,
And, weary, the heart doth repine,
Thy feet go adown to its shadows,
The Vale of the Shadow is thine.

The altars of loves that have faded
By the hand of Affection are reared;
They stand in the valley so shaded,
Which once to us lovely appeared.
'Tis the twilight of life's benediction,
Though dreary and gloomy at best;
To some 'tis the Vale of Affliction,
To me 'tis the Valley of Rest.

When the friendships of earth I have cherished
Afar from my poor heart have flown,
When pleasures, like flowers, have perished,
I go down the valley alone.
I welcome the shades that enfold me,
And keep back the demons of Care;
At the altar where none can behold me
The gates of Peace open to Pray'r!

A Brown-leaf Revery.

THE frost has kissed the velvet leaves
And turned them all to gold;
The breezes fill with aureate sheaves
The drear and lonely wold.

The tall and stately cedars spread
Above the rocks their sheen,
And each to heaven lifts his head,
In robe and cap of green.

November's wind unceasing blows,
And not a bough is still;
The brooklet with a murmur flows
'Neath mossy rock and hill.

The yellow-hammer's golden wings
Reflect the day-god's gleam;
The air the laggard warbler sings,
Of summer is a dream.

All day within the gullies deep
The cooling shadows lie;
There, there alone the breezes sleep
Beneath the leaden sky.

But full of beauty are the groves,
And yielding is the sod,
Where one in contemplation roves
Through temples built by God.

Fair Autumn, nature's ruling queen,
Accept this wreath of mine;
Thy sister Summer's emerald sheen,
Is not as fair as thine.



Her Wedding Night.

TO-NIGHT—to-night 's her wedding night,
And she so good and fair;
A girl whose dreamy eyes are blue,
A girl with golden hair;

And I am all alone to-night,
No others near, I ween,
A-thinking of departed years,
And all that might have been.

And one by one, while here I sit,
And stars in heaven burn,
The joys of other years, like birds
On golden wings, return.

They perch upon me, and their beaks
Are whispering regrets,
As if the mind had fall'n asleep—
As if the heart forgets.

When does the heart forget the love
That first within it grew?
When does the hand forget the touch
Of fingers warm and true?

Methinks I feel the touch of hands
That left me long ago ;
Methinks I see a maiden's smile
Like sunshine on the snow.

And how can I, when looking back
Upon a past so bright,
Forget the joys that blossomed then,
For this, her wedding night?

They tell me that a woman's hand
Is often bought with gold ;
They tell me that a woman's heart
Like merchandise is sold.

It can not be! it can not be
That her's was sold to-night!
In all this world another maid
Had not a soul so white.

But hark! I hear her wedding bells,
A joy to me denied :
I listen, with a bachelor's heart,
And bless the beauteous bride.

"I shall Hear."

[The last words of Beethoven were: "I SHALL HEAR!"]

I SHALL hear the wondrous music
Of the anthems they have sung
In the holy courts of Heaven,
Since this rolling world was young;
And the hymns the stars of morning
Sang together long ago,
I shall hear and hear forever:
They are singing yet, I know.

I shall hear the portals open,
Swinging wide to greet the soul
Of the ransomed flying upward
To the long desired goal;
And the murmur of the river,
Flowing ever sweet and clear
Thro' the meads and vales of Heaven—
I shall hear! O, I shall hear!

I shall hear the happy voices
Of the loved ones gone before;
Just beyond the dashing billows
They are waiting on the shore.

And the voice of One who keeps me
When the storm is dark and drear,
From the lightning and the tempest,
I shall hear! O, I shall hear!

I shall hear the feet of angels
In the avenues of gold,
And enraptured, I shall listen
To the sweet story of old;
From their lips 't is ever falling—
Falling gently on the ear
Of the ransomed, and its beauties
I shall hear! O, I shall hear!

I shall hear the harp of David—
Israel's crowned and singing king—
For I know the domes of Heaven
To its notes are echoing.
And the song sung by the Loved One
On the Isle of Patmos drear,
In his holy, God-sent vision,
I shall hear! O, I shall hear!

O, my soul! lift up with pleasure,
For this silence soon will break:
Of the joys beyond the river
We with gladness shall partake.

I am glad death's shadows gather,
I rejoice the end is near;
For my ears will then be opened:
I shall hear! O, I shall hear!



Fifty Years Ago.**A REVERY OF AGE.**

IN the soft and holy even
Of my life's declining hour,
I'm sitting by the window,
Toying with a faded flow'r:
'Tis a rose, and it reminds me,
In the sunset's softest glow,
Of a fairer flower that faded
Nearly fifty years ago.

I can see her in my Mem'ry,
As she looked when she was young;
And hear the silvery accents
Dropping from her youthful tongue.
Oh, long has she been sleeping
'Neath the flowers and the snow!
For she left me, smiling sweetly,
Nearly fifty years ago.

'Mid the hallowed recollections
Of the Past I live to-day;
They can not be dissipated
By the shadows dark and gray;

For the first love is the strongest
That the human heart can know;
And I felt its gentle wooings
Nearly fifty years ago.

Tell me, do the gates of Heaven
Open wide upon my hearth?
For the feelings stealing o'er me
Surely can not be of earth!
Ah! to-night I hear the music
That was chanted, sweet and low,
And I feel the kiss imprinted,
Nearly fifty years ago.

I hear the tones of loved ones
Stealing through the halls of time,
Wafted by the gentle breezes
From a purer, better clime.
To the dark and dreary river
Now an old man journeys slow,
Guided by the hand that led him
Nearly fifty years ago.

The Days of Old True Blue.

WE'RE going down life's hill-side, love,
Our day will soon be done;
The roses gathered long ago,
Are fading, one by one:
My heart recalls the good old days—
The days of old true blue,
When every maid was gentle, love,
And all the men were true.

If I could check the flight of Time,
And turn him backward now,
I'd smooth with loving fingers, dear,
The wrinkles from your brow.
We'd taste the joys of other days—
The days of old true blue—
When life was worth the living, love,
And coquetry none knew.

We're waiting for the angels, love,
We long to join their train;
We're knocking at the golden gates,
We shall not knock in vain.

They'll open to us by and by,
 . The days of old true blue—
We'll live again in Heaven, love,
 Where nothing proves untrue.



The Two Sleeves.

A mother sat by the fire one night,
Making a little sack ;
The winds without were mad with glee,
The sky o'er head was black.
The baby slept in his cosy crib,
Close at the mother's side ;
And a tear drop fell on the tiny sleeve
O'er which the needle she plied.

Hither and thither the needle flew,
Faster than fell the snow ;
The fire was bright as candle light,
With warmth the room was aglow.
And now and then the woman glanced
At the cradle ; would you believe,
That she was trying to look ahead,
The while she stitched the sleeve ?

Faster and faster the needle flew
Until the work was done ;
The sewer laid it down beside
The sleeping little one.

Then kissed the cheek of her baby fair,
The chrysalis of a man,
Wondering how many years her God
Had marked in the cherub's span.

What strange thoughts flitted thro' her mind
As she kissed the sleeping boy!
The airy castles she builded then
Were those of love and joy.
And higher, as if on eagle wings,
The hopes of the mother went;
Perhaps the crib she gently rocked
Might hold a President.

Baby laughed when he saw the sack,
And gladly, you may believe,
Ran his chubby little arm
Into the yellow sleeve.
And mother prayed that his wee arm,
Red as a rose that night,
Might ne'er be raised in aid of wrong,
But always for the right.

* * * * *

A woman sat by the fire one night,
At work on a dark blue sleeve,
She sewed the cuff to the shoulder seam,
With a sigh, you may believe.

Her thoughts went back full twenty years—
 Again she made the sack
For a cradled babe; the snow-flakes fell,
 And the sky o'er head was black.

The cradle lay in the garret's dust,
 The baby's clothes were hid,
The yellow sleeve with crimson edge,
 Nestled beneath a lid—
A precious treasure naught could buy,
 And time could not retrieve;
For that which covered the baby's arm
 Was now an empty sleeve!

For war had taken the cradle's pearl,
 And, in a bloody dell,
The arm which God had raised for Right,
 Struck by a grape-shot, fell.
And this is why the mother sewed
 The cuff to the shoulder seam,
Wondering if those twenty years
 Were more than a happy dream.

Yes, or No.

“**Y**HERE he comes across the meadow ;
On the clover falls his shadow.

“Little heart, why beat'st thou so?
Shall I answer Yes, or No?

“He has said, beneath the tree,
That he loves no maid but me ;

“And my face—I knew it grew
Red as roses kissed by dew !

“He has reached the meadow gate ;
But he pauses, as if fate

“Whispered in his timid ear
Words he had not deigned to hear.

“Tell me, sunbeams, ere you go,
Shall I answer Yes, or No?”

Then the maiden hid her head
In the curtains soft, and said,

In a whisper, sweet and low :

“*Lover, it shall not be No !*”

How Sheridan Came.

[Read on the Anniversary of the Battle of Cedar Creek.]

* * * * *

RECALL with me that break of day
When thirty thousand men in gray,
From out the forest, cold and damp,
With shout and yell fell on your camp.
All through the night across the fords
The rebel chief had led his hordes;
All through the night, beneath the trees
That scarcely quivered in the breeze,
With tiger tread and bated breath,
Forward had crept the ranks of death.
In vain, to stem the battle tide,
Did Emory shout and Custer ride:
Men bled in vain! The waves that roll'd
Against you could not be controll'd.
The sun came up; the fight grew hot,
Disputed was each gory spot;
But backward still, before the host
In gray, and CEDAR CREEK was *lost*!

But, ah! along the "broad highway"
That led from Winchester, that day,

To Cedar Creek, on coal black steed,
A trooper rode at lightning speed.
His spurs were red ! his boots were splashed,
He cared for naught as on he dashed !
Beneath his horse's hoofs the earth
Was groaning with a battle's birth,
And as he galloped, from afar
Toward him rolled the waves of war !
With loosened reign and head bent low,
And swift as shaft from Indian bow,
Or like a meteor in its flight
Across the vast expanse of night,
He flew along the hist'ric road !
A better horse man ne'er bestrode.
He bore your leader to your ranks,
With frothy bit and foamy flanks,
On ! by the half filled cannon ruts !
On ! on ! past Newtown's scatt'ring huts !
And redder still his spur points grew,
And dustier his coat of blue.
But all at once a shout—a cheer
Came floating from yon distant rear ;
From lip to lip the tidings ran :
“He comes ! he comes !—PHIL SHERIDAN !”
The stragglers turned ; the wounded cheered ;
Courage and Hope again appeared ;

Swinging his cap, he came in sight—
The victor of Opequan's fight.
A glance was all he needed, then
He formed his beaten ranks again ;
He rode the lines and saw you stand
Firm as the rocks on Ocean's strand ;
Rang out the bugles loud and clear,
And forward, with a mighty cheer,
You swept across Disaster's track,
And sent the gray coats whirling back !
In vain the foemen sought to stem
The leaden storm that shattered them :
As well might they have tried to crush
A cyclone in its onward rush !
Over the ground you 'd lost before,
Crushing the grass blades wet with gore,
With yell and cheer, and banners rent,
Led by Victory, on you went !
And e'er the hill-tops hid the sun,
The field of CEDAR CREEK was won !

A Memory.

WHAT do you think of yonder face,
The one that hangs above the vase,
Incased in rosewood olden ?
'Tis not Ginevra's—don't surmise ;
Ginevra never had such eyes,
Nor tresses half so golden.

A love of mine ? (You'll find cigars
Upon the mantel.) Bless your stars !
She'd lovers more than Helen :
They fought their battles 'neath the trees,
Each Hector had his Achilles,
And she the prize—fair Ellen.

She'd such a way of winning hearts !
At her command were all the darts
That gleam in Cupid's quiver :
Sometimes Love's silken bow she bent,
When from the West the day-god sent
His good-night to the river.

We often called her a coquette,
A name she well deserved, and yet,
So rare is four-leaved clover,

To know her, as we knew her when
Her laughter rang thro' glade and glen,
One could not help but love her.

She wedded, in her beauty's prime,
A nabob from a foreign clime—
Who came to win, and won her.
She loved him not: her father sold
His child for title, rank and gold—
Three millions bought his honor.

She graced the court of Arno's King;
She sang as only she could sing;
The king himself admired her.
She met and loved the young Lalage—
A boy—a servitor—a page:
No guilty love inspired her.

(But your Trabucos does not burn;
There're matches in yon Pisa urn.)
Her husband nursed his passion
Until—but you surmise the rest—
A dagger found a lover's breast:
In Arno 'tis the fashion.

'Twas then she showed the Tracy blood
That filled her veins—an azure flood:
Too proud to bear his scoffing,

She drifted with the tide one day,
Far out into the sun-lit bay—
They found her in the offing.

Around her face, so pale and fair,
Floated her wealth of golden hair,
By poets sung and cherished ;
And in her hands—I see them yet—
She held a lily, white and wet,
Type of the love that perished.

A shiny tress, a bit of lace,
And yonder laughing, girlish face,
Recall my Trojan Helen.
Although we fought our wars in vain,
I'd gladly fight them o'er again,
Were she the prize—fair Ellen.



The Burial of Custer.

OPEN ye Sunset gates!
Ope in the Summer late,
With your last flow'rs;
Swing ye wide to the bier,
Of the great dead and dear,
Crown'd with a sword and tear,
Custer of ours.

Red did his saber flash,
In his last ride and rash—
Wildest in story!
Cycles to come will tell
How, like a man, he fell,
(Round him the Indian yell),
Covered with glory!

Oft will the cheek grow pale,
When we list to the tale,
Told without bluster;
How they their steeds bestrode,
How straight to doom they rode,
Down the ravine death-sowed,
Headed by Custer.

Greet him, ye Sunrise land !
Meet him with open hand !
 Open the portal !
Back from the streams that run,
Where his great deed was done,
Comes the fame-laurel'd son,
 Custer immortal !

Where he first drew the sword—
And where he heard the word
 Tuneful of battle,
Let him forever sleep,
Close to old Hudson's sweep,
Dreamless thro' slumbers deep,
 Spite of war's rattle !

Not on the steed, that well
Thro' the fierce battle's hell
 Gallantly bore him,
Comes he in life to day ;
But in the grave's array,
Custer is the greatest—aye,
 With the shroud o'er him !

Ne'er to the reveille,
Sounding from sea to sea,
 The hero will muster ;

But on the rolls of Fame,
Over the highest name,
Burns an eternal flame,
Blazoning CUSTER!



The Faded Little Rose.

I find a letter in my desk ;
A pressed and scentless rose,
As fragile as a spider's web,
The yellow sheets inclose.
Its folded leaves recall a past
Forgotten long ago ;
Ah ! in the clovered meads of love
The rarest plants will grow !

I never thought to find it here
While rummaging to-day,
For I had deemed it, with its mates,
Forever put away—
Forever hid from mortal eyes
With twenty letters more :
The story of a woman's heart
They've told me o'er and o'er.

O, rose ! thou hast an hundred eyes ;
For whilst I handle thee,
And feel the wooings of the Past,
Thy leaves look up at me.

I see her as I saw her last—
 A winsome, dimpled miss;
I know that ere she sealed thee up
 She dewed thee with a kiss.

Tho' in her maidenhood she sleeps,
 With half an hundred dead,
I look into her deep blue eyes,
 I hear her gentle tread;
I touch her ripe, red lips again,
 And stand, where oft we stood
And builded airy castles, where
 The turnpike fringed the wood.

It is because my hands have touched
 This faded little rose,
That I have turned a moment from
 My more than prosy prose,
To sing of one who long ago
 Died like the flowers fair,
Or like the sweetest perfumes die
 Upon the summer air.

I scarce can read her faded lines—
 And as I trace them o'er
The tide comes rippling to my feet
 From Memory's distant shore.

Her letter trembles in my hands!
What man hath need of tears?
And yet I'm looking thro' a mist
Adown the aisle of years.

If it be true the dead look down
On us from far away,
She will not blush to read my thoughts
This holy summer day.
No! in a fairer, better land
Than this, to-day, she knows
That I have blessed the hand that pressed
For me this little rose!



If ever I Forget.

ASK me not if I remember
Pledges given long ago ;
Love is more than one lone ember.
Sending forth a feeble glow.
Never more will croak the raven,
White will turn his wings of jet,
Ships will shun a stormless haven,
If ever I forget !

Wanders yet across the meadow,
As of old, the little rill—
Here and there a slender shadow,
Where we quarreled, as lovers will.
Love will die bereft of passion,
Stars will rise when they should set,
Kissing will go out of fashion,
If ever I forget !

Do I e'er recall how pleasant
Were the gloamings, rich and true,
When we heard the ruffled pheasant
Drumming where the larches grew ?

Blue will bloom the dandelion,
Dews will not the clover wet,
Rigel will desert Orion,
If ever I forget!

I remember how we parted
Where the zephyrs wooed the dell—
Thou to stand, love, broken hearted,
'Neath a flowery wedding bell.
I will dream, and wake, believing
That our lips have never met,
Fortunes will be worth retrieving,
If ever I forget!



In the City.

I SIT at the lofty window—
On the pavement, far below,
The life of the mighty city,
Like the tide, doth ebb and flow.
I follow the feet of traffic
That lead to the House of Gain,
Or gaze at the pallid cripple
Who moves along in pain.

Away, from my lofty station,
The lamps are stretching far;
The flash of the last one seeming
The gleam of a distant star.
O, lamps of the roaring city!
When will ye cease to shed
Your light on the beggar's tatters,
And on the rich man's head?

I wait—but no song of gladness
Comes up to me from below;
No anthem of peace is chanted
Where the crowd surge to and fro;

For the gold shod feet of Mammon
Crush out the heart's best pray'r,
And the song of love, just dawning,
Becomes a wail of despair.

O, city of crime and riches!
O, city of mart and shrine!
With all your wealth and splendor,
I would not call ye mine.
Afar from your roar and rattle,
Afar from the flashing night,
I know loved ones are thinking
Of the absent one to-night.

I bow my head to the blessings
That come on the wings of pray'r,
And hallow, with sweet affection,
The walls that inclose me here.
The voices of dear ones greet me,
I see each face again;
And the laughs of the silver maples
I hear on my window pane.

O, give me the peace and quiet
That reign in the village street,
And the spot, adorned by Nature,
Where grass and brooklet meet!

And let the voice of Friendship
 With ardor speak my name,
Give me these, and take the city,
 With all its wealth and shame.

Better a seat in the village,
 Under the maple's shade,
Than a throne in the gilded palace,
 Or the marble marts of trade!
Better a grave in the hamlet,
 And a couch 'neath the country mold,
Than serve a slave in the city,
 Fettered with fetters of gold!

I see no longer the city,
 Although it lies below;
I've shut the windows of vision,
 As I close my shutters, so;
And in the realms of dreamland,
 Through which I love to roam,
I'll stand, ere the morning breaketh,
 Once more 'neath the roof of home.

CHICAGO, ILLS., 1883.

Five and Forty.

HERE'S my hand! What! don't you know me?
Heaven! is the change so great?
Yes, I know my hair is silvered—
Broken my once manly gait.
Take a good long look, old fellow,
You have seen me oft, I know;
We were college boys together,
Five and forty years ago!

Five and forty! five and forty!
Almost half a century;
You have been to foreign countries,
I have never seen the sea.
You have risen to position,
Well deserved, old boy, I know;
No one thought you'd go to Congress,
Five and forty years ago!

Yes! I married Betty Wilson;
She is spared to me to-day:
Side by side we two old people
Wander down life's cheerless way.

Children? Bear with me a moment,
Till I little calmer grow;
Children sprung from that love marriage,
Five and forty years ago!

Where the wavelets of Stone River
By the winds are lulled to rest,
Sleeps my eldest darling, Edgar,
With the blue upon his breast;
Harry slumbers where the brightest,
Clearest Georgian waters flow:
Ah! they say he looked like I did
Five and forty year ago!

How's your wife, John? Heaven bless her!
She, of all the Shirley girls,
Was the sweetest and the fairest—
Face enshrined in golden curls:
No, my boy, I've not forgotten
How you used to be her beau,
In the sunrise of life's morning,
Five and forty years ago!

I'm professor in the college—
The same old college, John,
Where we racked our brains o'er Virgil,
Sallust, Cæsar, Xenophon;

There's a chair at my disposal,
You would fill it well I know;
Won't you take it, John? Remember
Five and forty years ago!

Gliding down life's tide together,
Two old stagers, you and I!
All our playmates, rest their spirits!
'Neath the long green grasses lie.
May we sleep, our life work over,
Where the lilies bloom and blow,
Side by side, just as we studied,
Five and forty years ago!



The Charge.

WE rode from the battle, but shattered and
torn,
Scarce fifty where hundreds had galloped at morn.
I carried the bugler, but minus his horn—
I found him shot through at the ford,
Where the grass, cut and trampled, look haggard
and lorn,
And the trooper lay dead on his sword.

We dreamt not of ambush when "Draw!" was
the cry;
Our sabers flashed back the bright glare from on
high;
The bugle blew "Charge!" and beneath the blue
sky
We rode for the river that runs
To the sea with a song for the men who could die
In the breath of the enemy's guns.

Death rained in our faces; it struck us on flank;
And hundreds fell dead on the velvety bank,
Or crimsoned the stream with their blood as they
sank,

With a hero's last shout 'neath the wave ;
And I—would to God I had fortune to thank
For a couch with my comrades so brave !

My souvenir ? Look at this scar on my brow !
The fellow who gave it is slumbering now
Where the lilies their heads to the clear waters
bow.

I lost my good steed in the stream,
But got me another—I can not tell how,
For one-half of that fight seems a dream.

A dream ! ah ! my friend, would to Heaven 'twere
such !

But that it is not, a proof is this crutch,
And this scar on my brow—but I don't mind it
much ;

A soldier's best badge is a scar :
But, pardon my story ; old memories touch
The heart like a voice from afar.

Al Kennon.

OVER there, where the waves dash madly,
Lieth a ship, a helpless thing—
Over there where the sea-gull sadly
Sweeps with single waft of wing!
No more floats her gallant pennon—
Wind and waves have torn it so;
On the "lost list" write, "Al Kennon—
Lost where wrecking tempests blow."

Out of port, with white sails flying,
Proudly, grandly went the ship:
Left behind her women crying,
Left fore'er her natal slip.
How the silver waters glistened
Underneath her painted keel!
How the children laughed and listened
To the music of her wheel!

Past the storm-cursed promontory,
Where the waves like cannons boom;
Northward—must I tell the story?
Northward to the seas of doom:

Where her mighty masts were shattered
By the storm fiends in their glee;
And her snowy sails were scattered
Far around upon the sea.

No one left to tell the story!
All beneath the waters sleep!
Till the waves with age are hoary,
Will the sea its secret keep.
Not a single art called human
Can from it the myst'ry take;
And the tears of gentle woman
Not one sleeper can awake.

Ah! no more her starry pennon
Greets the wind from tropic shore,
And the tuneful name Al Kennon
Will be whispered never more.
Let the ages roll above her,
Now with mad disaster decked:
Gently, billows, if ye love her;
Maiden's hopes with her were wrecked

A Madrigal.

Love come forth, and let us ramble
Down the path that skirts the bramble,
While the bee is in the clover,
By the kine half eaten over,
And the dew on blossoms linger,
For the touch of foot and finger ;
Come ! the distant dells are ringing
With the thrush's passion singing !

Ah, me ! how our thoughts commingle
As we wander down the dingle,
Down the dingle through the clover,
By the kine half eaten over—
Lovely clover whose pink blossoms
Hear the secrets of our bosoms—
Hear the words till now unspoken,
Words that seal love's sacred token.

Darling, if this ripe, red clover,
By the herds half eaten over,
Ever sees us lorn and parted,
Or beholds you broken hearted,

May the happy thoughts that mingle
As we wander down the dingle,
Be like birds that sing at even,
Here on earth, the songs of Heaven.

Others, love, have walked before us
'Neath the stars that twinkle o'er us,
Hand in hand across the clover,
By the bees well hunted over;
Lovers' lips have told the story
Time will tell when he is hoary;
I will tell it if you'll ramble
Down the path that skirts the bramble.



The Ship that Never Comes.

HERE'S a ship, so says tradition,
Sailing home to every heart ;
But the winds of adverse fortune
Strive to keep the two apart.
Little faces at the windows
Of our country's brightest homes,
Tell a tale of fond hearts waiting
For the ship that never comes.

I have waited in the gloaming,
After watching all the day,
For the vessel that is tardy—
“It will come,” my heart would say ;
“May be it has lost a rudder
Some where on the fickle sea ;
They will build for it another :
Then thy ship will come to thee.”

And I waited on, in silence ;
Rose and set night's fairest star ;
But the pennons of my vessel,
Treasure-laden, kept afar.

Then I cried, "This ceaseless watching
Darkens many a joyful home;
For the heart's sunshine is absent
With the ship that does not come."

I've a neighbor, who is looking
For this mystic treasure-ship,
That has never left its moorings
In the heart's most sacred slip.
It is thus the wide world over;
You will find, in many homes,
Little hearts, in silence, waiting
For the ship that never comes.



This Farm for Sale.

WITH weary heart and trembling hand
I guide the team afield ;
Good horses ! ah, they seem to see
The grief I try to shield !
The skies are lowering over head,
Misfortune blows a gale ;
Put up a board, and write thereon
These words, " This Farm for Sale."

What ! sell the homestead, broad and fair ;
The dearest spot on earth ?
Shall strangers sit, where I have sat,
Around the family hearth ?—
The farm where mother took the vow
That made her father's bride—
The place where laughing Nell was born—
The house where Willie died !

And must I part with memories
So very dear to me ?
The mossy spring, the purling brook,
The leaning apple tree ?

The shadows of departed ones
Rise up and touch my arm ;
I hear their pleading voices now :
“Do not desert the farm.”

Enshrined within my lonely heart,
The house where I was born,
One summer night, when heaven's rain
Beat down the waving corn.
Dear is the room where oft I've passed
Beneath the chast'ning rod—
Where father laid me early on
The altar of his God.

While I have strength to swing the ax,
While I can guide the plow,
While I can toil and bring the sweat
Of labor to my brow,
I'll keep misfortune's wolf at bay :
Love triumphs over gold !
Take down the board and break it, John,
This farm shall not be sold !

The Soldier's Tot.

A PAUPER'S grave on the hill-side
Was all he got, I know :
Men called him vagabond, and yet
His heart was white as snow.
He never harmed a living thing,
And it was sad to see
The veteran trundled to his grave
Beside the hawthorn tree.

I used to like to hear him tell
How, when the foemen came
Across the wave, to trail in dust
The flag we love to name,
He took his rifle from the wall—
Ah! he was useful then!
And marched to meet the enemy
With other gallant men.

And when he laid aside his pipe,
For me to fill again,
I knew that I should hear the tale
Of glorious Lundy's Lane ;

And as I listened, all entranced,
 A boy, upon his knee,
I saw the charging hosts, and heard
 The shouts of victory!

But ne'er again his tales of war
 Will thrill the youthful soul;
The life-long march is over now,
 For death has beat the roll.
No more adown the village street,
 With feeble steps, and slow,
Comes one who, tho' a "county charge,"
 It did me good to know.

Though in a pauper's coffin sleeps
 The soldier of the line,
I know that in the camp above
 He gave the countersign!
What if the purse-proud shun the spot
 Where o'er him grasses wave?
The sweetest flowers do not blush
 To grow upon his grave.

Why, in the tree above his grave
 A wren hath built her nest;
And every morn a linnet sings
 Above the soldier's breast!

I love, on summer days, to seek
A long-neglected spot—
'Tis where the brave old hero sleeps
In his pauper's grave, forget.



November.

“**N**O meat!” the butcher says sometimes,
When we come tardy to his killing;
The poet sighs and says, “no rhymes!”
And leaves his last verse without filling.
“No letter!” with this sentence brief
Our P. M. puts out Hope’s last ember,
And Nature turns another leaf
To greet us with the cry—“November!”

No zephyrs now to fan our cheeks,
No cider, Nature’s liquid treasure;
No day-dreams by the lucent creeks—
The air’s too chilly for that pleasure.
No stars but cold ones in the sky,
Their icy twinkle all remember;
No linen coats now greet the eye,
No ends to chills and colds—November!

No robin in the leafy bough,
No lovers walk across the meadow;
No fans we need to cool us now,
No sunshine, consequently shadow:

No rose but what is pinched with cold,
No pocket for the nasal member,
No linen pantaloons are sold,
No ice cream festivals—November!

No hangers o'er the garden gate,
With lips to lips beneath Astarte;
No courting by a fireless grate,
No "invites" to a moonlight party:
No shiv'ring bachelor loves his lot,
No maid to keep alive love's ember;
No wife to make home lively spot,
No one to build his fires—November!

No swallows twittering under eaves—
Their absence helps to make life dreary;
No novel reading 'neath the leaves
Of Summer till the eyes grow weary:
But with a smile we welcome back
The frosty month, that all remember,
For every year the almanac,
Or something else, brings us November.

My Friends.

FOUR hundred friends have I,
Who greet me every day—
Some in gilt, and some in green,
And some in brown, and gray.

Their wealth of prose and song
Is better far than gold ;
The gifts that they bestow in me
Outshine the mines of old.

I never go in vain
To them for lordly cheer :
The friendship that they offer me
Grows richer year by year.

Four hundred faithful friends,
Who ne'er their trust betray,
Are those that stand upon my shelves,
In gilt, and green, and gray.

Tines.

[Written in a Presentation Copy of Scott's Poems.]

ACCCEPT from me this simple gift—
The breathings of a Poet's soul,
Whose music rivals Heaven's strains,
And round the world in rapture rolls.
He sang his way into men's hearts;
And drew the tear from Beauty's eye;
And, unassuming, wrote his name
Where mortal names can never die.
Go read him till thy spirit hears
The "Minstrel's" song in Scottish homes—
Until, adown the aisles of years,
The gleam of Marmion's helmet comes:
For thee the Lady Clare shall sing,
For thee shall flash Fitz James's sword;
For thee the woods of Teviot ring
With deathless strains from Abbottsford.

FINIS.



